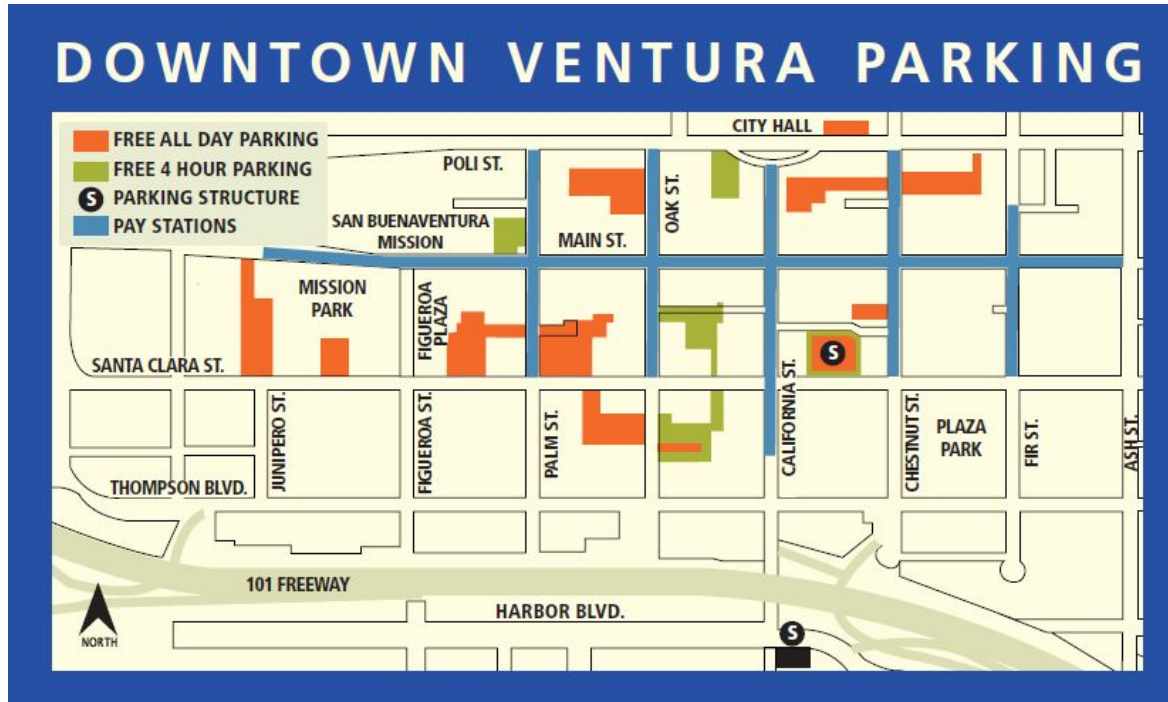


# Case Study Example #3– Ventura

## Impetus for Parking Program

The parking program is designed to complement and support the Vision of the Ventura Downtown Specific Plan. It supports the form-based code approved in 2007 and its emphasis on livability and vitality.

There is a perceived parking shortage for Downtown Ventura. The actual on-street parking shortage is in the Downtown Core (274 spaces that are full 8 of 11 hours per day).



## Goals & Guiding Principles:

### *Downtown Parking Management Goals*

- Parking is a means to achieve broader community goals by leveraging existing assets
- Manage parking supply and demand

## Process/Approach

The City of Ventura developed a transportation and parking management plan (Nelson/Nygaard 2007) and then implemented recommendations from the plan.

The plan included near term and long term recommendations that were incorporated into the Long Range Plan.

Based upon this plan, the City of Ventura conducted an in-depth parking data survey of existing off-street and on-street parking in the Downtown area to determine the feasibility of paid parking, residential parking permits and restructuring of

time limits. The City of Ventura also examined land uses and vacancy rates, using this information to validate new parking requirements recommended for the downtown area.

The City developed goals and guiding principles based upon:

- Customer First
- Business & city partnership
- Increase % of employees commuting by alternative modes to increase available customer parking
- Improve all modes of access
- Comprehensive on and off-street system
- Share on-street parking revenue and reinvest in the project area
- Begin analysis of the feasibility of a parking structure

## Solutions/Strategies

### #1: Demand Based Parking Requirements

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lack of parking inventory</li><li>• Perceived lack of on-Street parking</li><li>• Misuse of on-street parking spaces by employees</li><li>• Create a data base of parking information to establish baseline for both the City and stakeholders.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conducted a comprehensive parking inventory and occupancy study to understand on-street and off-street parking</li><li>• Develop a land use and vacancy data base to provide square footage and validate recommended parking requirements.</li></ul>

### #2: Employee Parking Management

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employees park in prime spaces in front of businesses limiting access to customers</li><li>• Many employers direct employees to park in front of other businesses.</li><li>• Inability to create an incentive for employees to move out of prime on-street parking spaces.</li><li>• Enforcement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parking pay stations for the prime on-street parking spaces</li><li>• Free off-street parking for long term visitors and employee</li><li>• Additional enforcement and police supervision</li></ul>

### #3: Time Limits/Residential Parking Permits/Location Strategy

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Perception – no parking downtown</li><li>• Reality – many empty parking spaces block or two away</li><li>• A variety of time limits and loading zone issues</li><li>• Develop comprehensive on-street and off-street system</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create core zone for retail customers</li><li>• Create area for employees</li><li>• Use time limits in outer area</li><li>• Analyze use of loading zones and short term parking spaces</li><li>• Create a residential parking permit program</li></ul>

## #4: Effective Communication and Marketing

Challenges	Recommendations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inability to find parking space</li><li>• Need clear and consistent signage, marketing and outreach</li><li>• Message development for paid and free parking</li></ul>	<p>Implement a highly visible, consistent signage program that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Directional signs at entrances to City as well as other key places showing where parking is located.</li><li>• Signage and information helping people to find free parking outside of core</li><li>• “Pedestrian” oriented signage</li><li>• Develop localized message to meet need of community</li><li>• Simplify parking pay process</li><li>• Work closely with merchants, business organizations and residents.</li><li>• Assess new technologies for improving communications and payment features</li><li>• Reinvest parking revenues into downtown</li><li>• Link parking enforcement and downtown security issues</li></ul>

## Results & Next Steps

In 2010, the City of Ventura revised the parking code and purchased and installed pay stations in Downtown Ventura (originally looking at 411 on-street paid spaces and now down to 318 paid parking spaces). The program was implemented in September 2010.

The City of Ventura continues to work with stakeholders and businesses to refine the program. The City eliminated variable pricing (\$1.00 for first two hours and \$1.50 for every additional hour) because it was too complex and slowed down the payment process. The City also reduced revenue hours and has noticed a reduction in the average stay of vehicles (now at 1.04 hours). While the program is not generating the amount of revenue anticipated (50% to 55% of estimated revenue), it seems that there are now parking spaces available for patrons, a significant reduction in amount of cruising for parking, improvement in traffic flow on Main Street and a movement of employees into appropriate off-street spaces.

## Lessons Learned

The biggest challenge is the complexity of implementation. Each situation is unique and requires an understanding of local conditions. It is also a time consuming process to build a partnership with the local stakeholders.

The importance of communication and messaging cannot be underestimated. It is critical to develop an approach and to use tools that cater to the user.

Technology is improving but still not at a level that creates a seamless easy-to-understand payment process. Adding features can slow down the process and create user frustration.

Involving stakeholders throughout the process is critical. The City of Ventura worked with community stakeholders in a seven year process to develop and implement the program.